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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 DAR ES SALAAM 000888

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SUBJECT: ZANZIBAR: CCM-CUF RECONCILIATION TALKS STALLED

REF: A. DAR ES SALAAM 0609
[1](#)B. DAR ES SALAAM 0559

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission D. Purnell Delly for reasons 1.4(b,d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) Progress in the reconciliation talks between the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and the Civic United Front (CUF) on how to resolve the political impasse in Zanzibar appears to have stalled following the mid-May visit to Pemba by the CCM Secretary General Yusuf Makamba. In remarks to Pemba citizens May 18, Makamba alleged that both a re-run of the 2005 presidential elections and a government of national unity were no longer on the table. CUF leaders have emphasized their loss of faith in President Kikwete's commitment to resolving the political crisis in Zanzibar and are alarmed by what they view as an attempt by CCM to postpone any power sharing agreement until after the 2010 elections. In a June 17 meeting, President Kikwete told Ambassador Retzer that CCM's approach was to address power sharing as the last item in the reconciliation talks. Kikwete said that formation of a unity government in the near term would simply mean the parties continuing their quarrels inside the government. Although both CCM and CUF pledged publicly on June 16 to continue negotiations, CUF faces intense pressure from its membership. CUF members are increasingly restless and pressuring their leaders to show results from the talks or pursue other means to achieve their political aims. END SUMMARY.

CUF Perspective: No Agreement in Sight

[1](#)2. (C) In a June 15 lunch meeting with the DCM, CUF's key leadership including Party Chairman Ibrahim Lipumba, Foreign Relations spokesman Ismail Jussa, and Deputy Secretary General Juma Duni Haji, expressed their frustration and loss of hope from the lack of progress in reconciliation talks with CCM during the last three weeks. After five months of regular meetings and negotiations, Jussa told PolOffs on June 12 that CUF fears CCM wants to postpone any power sharing or formation of a government of national unity in Zanzibar until after the general elections in 2010. &This would put CUF

exactly where we were after the 1995 and 2000 elections: CCM leaders engage us in negotiations, up until the eve of elections, then do not honor the agreement. We need a government of national unity so that we can ensure the groundwork is set for free and fair elections in 2010,8 Jussa stressed.

¶3. (C) On June 9, Hon. Hamad Rashid Mohamed, head of opposition in Parliament, candidly told PolCouns about his fears regarding CUF,s membership and their frustration with the status quo. He said that if progress is not made by August 15, the party would have to tell its members it had been &betrayed8 by CCM. Mohamed stressed that CUF took President Kikwete &seriously.8 In Mohamed,s view, CUF has already dropped its top demand) a rerun of the 2005 elections. However, some type of coalition government that is in place before 2010 is an essential demand for CUF. CUF leaders have told PolOffs repeatedly since 2005 that if there is no government of national unity, their members have no faith that elections in 2010 will be free and fair, and will therefore not participate in them.

Demoralized by CCM Secretary General

¶4. (C) Both Hon. Mohamed and Ismail Jussa, who in late April had expressed optimism to Embassy officers that the two sides were close to an agreement, pinpointed the commencement of the stalemate as the unexpected visit of the CCM Secretary General, Yusuf Makamba to Pemba on May 18. During rallies, Makamba told Pembans: "If the National Football Team (Simbas) won the championship, would you expect them to share it with the Taifa Stars?" implying that in an election victory, the winner should not be expected to share power. Jussa said

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Makamba,s statements not only violated CCM and CUF,s agreement to only speak jointly to the press about the status of negotiations, but essentially took both of CUF,s key demands off the table: a re-run of the 2005 elections and a government of national unity. In Chairman Lipumba,s view, Makamba,s statements were said strategically to "demoralize" CUF membership on Pemba.

¶5. (C) In an effort to clarify Makamba,s statements and their implications on the reconciliation process, CUF Secretary General and three-time Presidential candidate,

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Maalim Seif Hamad, requested a one-on-one meeting with Makamba. As a result of their May 26 encounter, Hamad and Makamba signed a letter pledging to work to conclude the talks by August 15 and to implement a power sharing agreement by October 2007. Despite this letter, both Lipumba and Jussa expressed their great discouragement to the DCM on June 15. Jussa explained: "The letter should have broken the impasse of the negotiations; however, Makamba sent the letter to both sides' negotiators 'to advise' the teams, instead of instructing the negotiators to follow the agreed timeline."

CUF Pessimistic But Continuing Talks

¶6. (C) Lipumba and Jussa stressed that CUF,s governing Council was now meeting to discuss the way forward. Without detailing the deliberations of the Council, Lipumba told the DCM, &We want to condemn Makamba,s statements but make clear that we will continue with the talks. Some CUF members are calling for us to pull out of the talks, but what purpose will this serve?8 (Note: While Lipumba noted that some CUF members were in favor of the talks continuing, he omitted the fact that approximately 200 CUF supporters demonstrated against the talks at CUF headquarters in Dar es Salaam the very same morning--June 15 at about 9:30 a.m. Pictures in the June 16 Citizen newspaper showed a mob of CUF members surrounding Ibrahim Lipumba and Maalim Seif Hamad, holding posters with slogans such as "The talks stop today" and "We are tired. Stop the talks.")

¶7. (C) Both Chairman Lipumba and Hon. Mohamed acknowledge that the discontent and frustration among CUF members is widespread. However, neither would predict if CCM and CUF do not reach an agreement, what their party members' reaction might be. Jussa told PolOffs on June 12 that members may press for new leadership within CUF, or may resort to violence if their faith in the political process is sufficiently damaged. Hon. Mohamed revealed that during Maalim Seif Hamad's March 2007 visit Pemba, CUF members were telling Hamad directly: "You are tired; you need to step aside and let new leadership into CUF."

CCM,S Perspective: Power Sharing Saved For Last

¶8. (C) During a State House meeting with President Kikwete June 17, Ambassador Retzer asked for an update on the CCM-CUF reconciliation talks. Kikwete said that despite recent press articles suggesting otherwise, he believed the talks are progressing and were continuing on schedule, but that the two sides had not reached any agreement on a power-sharing arrangement or government of national unity.

¶9. (C) Regarding a power sharing agreement, Kikwete stressed that the CCM did not want to create a government in Zanzibar that would allow the two parties to bring their quarrels inside the government. "The people of Zanzibar deserve a government that will work; we don't want to create a unity government that fails the next morning," he said. Kikwete emphasized that CCM,s approach was to save the issue of power sharing until last as it was the most difficult issue: "CUF is trying to fast track the process." Kikwete said that the CCM wants to address other issues first, such as how to level the playing field during campaign and election periods and other confidence building measures.

¶10. (C) President Kikwete did refer to the controversy created by CCM Secretary General Makamba,s visit to Pemba.

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In his view, while CUF has accused CCM of violating the talks by making statements to the press about negotiations, Makamba had only mentioned that the two sides had not yet reached an agreement and that there would not be a re-run of the elections. &Hon. Hamad Mohamed (leader of the opposition in Parliament) told me in person that CUF understands there will be no re-run of the election, so it is unclear why CUF is blaming Makamba for his statements," Kikwete remarked.

¶11. (C) In closing, Kikwete noted to the Ambassador that CUF leaders approached him during Parliament's June 13 budget session, complaining about pressure from their members to reach an agreement. &You know,8 Kikwete said to the Ambassador, &CUF gets these rent-a-crowds8 implying that CUF tries to get press attention through hired or manipulated crowds. Despite the concerns he raised, Kikwete expressed hope that the talks would eventually reach a successful conclusion; he also confirmed that the negotiations would continue as planned on Monday June 18 in Bagamoyo.

Comment and Analysis:

¶12. (C) CUF has told EmbOffs unequivocally that its bottom line is a government of national unity before the Zanzibar elections in 2010; CCM, on the other hand, has made clear that a power-sharing arrangement in the Government of Zanzibar (GOZ) is the last item on its negotiations agenda. For CCM, any agreement to allow CUF into the GOZ represents a risky proposition before 2010, as a voluntary relinquishing of power will be unpopular with many party leaders and members. Moreover, any future discord within such a coalition government could be viewed as a failure for President Kikwete, which in turn could cause problems as he seeks a second term in office.

¶13. (C) Kikwete seems skeptical about a national unity government in the near term, despite broad agreement among sources that Kikwete has the political sway needed to ensure that President Karume accepts a power-sharing arrangement. The Civic United Front's faith in President Kikwete as their chief CCM ally has swung like a pendulum to the other side, with CUF leaders now saying they have lost all hope in Kikwete and his promise to "address the political impasse on Zanzibar." Thus, while CUF tries to accelerate the talks to seriously discuss a national unity government, CCM is applying the brakes, if not attempting to take a complete detour, until after 2010 elections. It is not surprising that both sides are frustrated and have not made any clear, substantive progress since the negotiations began in January ¶2007. Thus, while the wheels of Zanzibar,s reconciliation talks are spinning, they do not appear to be covering much ground.

¶14. (C) There is no doubt that CUF faces a quandary. Its leaders are not only facing tough negotiations with the CCM, but fractious elements within their own party. By failing to mention the confrontation between CUF leaders and angry CUF members on June 15, just hours before his lunch with the DCM, Chairman Ibrahim Lipumba apparently wanted to mask the growing dissatisfaction among members. While we don't have concrete evidence supporting CUF,s claims that its youth are radicalizing and starting to support a third option--Islamic fundamentalism-- one thing is clear: conditions to increase the frustration level are present on Zanzibar. Unemployment and poverty are widespread; many youth feel they do not have any alternatives and are increasingly disaffected with democracy after what they view as a third rigged election in October 2005. END COMMENT.
RETZER